

SIXPENCE

PRIESTHOOD AND REUNION

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PRIESTHOOD AND REUNION

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THE most controversial element in reunion discussions between Churches of the Anglican Communion and non-conformist bodies is the ministry. The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral has, even in its most weakened form (Lambeth, 1920) insisted that the historic episcopate is an essential in any united church. But the schematic arrangement of the Quadrilateral has had two unfortunate results. It has divorced the episcopate from the whole of the sacred ministry with the result that most reunion schemes omit any reference to the priesthood. It has divorced the ministry from the organic tradition of the Faith of the Church with the result that Faith and Order become distinct and not organic elements. It has been as a protest against such a divorce that some recent Anglican books have been written.

Certain recent non-conformist books on the ministry, and many of the reunion-schemes, show a growing willingness to accept some kind of constitutional episcopacy. There is even a willingness to accept episcopal ordination as a general rule, provided it is no more than of the *bene esse* of the Church. This provision is designed to exclude any suggestion of the doctrine of Apostolic Succession as essential to the fullness of the ministry.

As Anglicans we must regard this as a hopeful step in the growing understanding of our tradition. But it is episcopacy as a governmental means of unity on the horizontal plane, and episcopacy as a symbol of continuity on the vertical plane that has commended itself to many. This much is evident from a leading non-conformist of the Church of South India, Bishop J. E. Lesslie Newbigin in *The Reunion of the Church* (S.C.M. Press, London, 1948); and from a Methodist leader of the Ceylon Scheme of Union, Mr. D. T. Niles, in *The Temple of*

Christ in Ceylon (Methodist Missionary Society, London, 1948). What is lacking in both of these discussions is any willingness to see in the unity and continuity of the episcopate a real, organic connection with the apostolic ministry, or any essential ministerial commission transmitted by the fact of episcopacy. There is as yet no understanding of episcopacy as of the *esse* of the Church.

There are those who would say that this is sufficient and that, granted this much, Anglican Churches should enter schemes of reunion and grow together with their non-conformist brethren into a fuller understanding of historic Faith and Order. But serious limitations of the non-conformist grasp of the meaning of episcopacy can be seen from its clear rejection of any doctrine or fact of the *priesthood*. An examination of many of the recent plans of reunion reveals that the word "priest" is rarely used at all and that the word "presbyter" appears instead to designate the second office of the ministry. It is usually argued that "presbyter" is the more correct term to use since it is an exact English transliteration of the New Testament term "presbyteros". It is said to correspond more exactly to this than does the term "priest" which suggests the Greek "hier-eus" or the Latin "sacerdos". Presbyter is more Biblical and has the same meaning as priest. The argument is sometimes advanced in the United States that "priest" is the liturgical term appearing in *The Book of Common Prayer* and that "presbyter" is the canonical term appearing in the *Constitution and Canons*. Since reunion-schemes are constitutional documents, it is more fitting to use the canonical term.

These explanations are all very reasonable and if we had no more information than the mere words, the suspicions voiced by some would be unfounded. But it is interesting to note as one examines and collates the successive editions of reunion-schemes that the term "priest" appears not at all in some schemes, that it did appear in others and was removed through successive revisions; or that other material in the schemes renders the sacerdotal character of the office open to question. A uniform *tendenz* in a series of reunion-schemes to minimize "priest" and emphasize "presbyter" is at least suggestive that "priesthood" is truly being rejected. A specific examination of the many reunion-schemes indicates the import of this tendency.¹

¹ For published texts of reunion schemes, cf. G. K. A. Bell, *Documents on Christian Unity* (Oxford Univ. Press, 3 vols.). For bibliography covering all pamphlet and commentary material, cf. H. R. T. Brandreth, *Unity and Reunion: A Bibliography*, 2nd. ed. (London, 1948).

1. The Church of South India. The oldest reunion scheme and the only one which has come to fulfilment is that of The Church of South India. There is a complete absence in the formularies of this church of any specification of priesthood. The only reference to the fact of priesthood appears in *The Constitution*, II:7 (*Basis of Union*, Sect. 5), "The Ministry of the Church."

All members of the Church have equally access to God. All according to their measure, share in the heavenly High Priesthood of the risen and ascended Christ, from which alone the Church derives its character as a royal priesthood. All alike are called to continue upon earth the priestly work of Christ by showing forth in life and word the glory of the redeeming power of God in him. No individual and no one order in the Church can claim exclusive possession of this heavenly priesthood.

With these words no one would disagree, but Anglicans would certainly have to take a further step and indicate that the high priestly character of Christ is communicated to more than just the priestly character of the Church, and that there is a ministerial priesthood distinct from that of the laity. All other references in the *Constitution* are to "presbyters" and the term "priest" is never used to refer to the ministry. The conclusion of Dr. E. L. Mascall of Oxford on this point seems to be inescapable. "It must be noted, however, that the *Basis* carefully, and presumably deliberately, avoids any suggestion that the ordained ministry of the Church participates in the High Priesthood of Christ in any other way than that in which the laity do; all that is said about it is that to it men have been called by God and set apart in the Church."

This careful avoidance of the word "priest" together with a doctrinal statement excluding the fact of ministerial priesthood in the constitutional documents of The Church of South India is most meticulously preserved in the liturgical formularies of The Church of South India. The *Ordinal* for use in this church is modelled very closely upon the Anglican Ordinal using the arrangement, sequence, and content of *The Deposited Book of 1928*. A collation of the texts of the South Indian Ordinal and the Anglican Ordinal demonstrates that every reference to priesthood has been removed and that specific changes are made to minimize the sacerdotal character of the "presbyter".

The title of the service reads: "... for the Ordination of Presbyters", and all rubrics throughout the service refer to "Presbyter". The doctrinally significant rubric at the opening of the service in the Anglican Ordinal, "... there shall be a

sermon, or Exhortation, declaring the Duty and Office of such as come to be admitted Priests: how necessary that Order is in the Church of Christ . . . " has been revised to read, " The sermon shall relate to the mutual duties and privileges of ministers and congregations in the Church of Christ." The stress upon the necessity of priesthood in the Church is thus removed.

The ordination begins with a Collect of South Indian origin referring to " ministers of Thy Word and Sacraments " and " this holy ministry " without any distinction of office. The presentation is made of " these persons to be admitted to the order of Presbyters ", and they are greeted by the bishop as those " to receive this day . . . the holy office of this ministry ". The bishop exhorts the congregation to private prayer for those " to be ordained Presbyters ". The Litany contains a petition for those " to be ordained presbyters ". The Collect for the Holy Communion is borrowed from the Anglican Ordinal with the careful substitution of " now called to the office of Presbyter ". The charge of the bishop to the ordinands has been very much reduced in length by the omission of all passages referring to the Church as the Spouse and Body of Christ and other references of a sacramental character. The vows are taken for " the office and ministration of Presbyters ". The question put to the ordinands concerning doctrine omits the significant phrase of the Anglican Ordinal, " as this Church hath received the same." This deletion corresponds exactly to a similar deletion in the *Basis of Union*, Section 3, in which the Faith of the Church had originally been defined " as the Church hath always received it." The question concerning doctrine in the Ordinal and the provision concerning doctrine in the *Basis of Union* refer to the Holy Scriptures and the Creeds without any clause requiring them to be held within the context of the Church's historic tradition. The deletion made in the *Basis of Union* some time before the union was effected is now revealed to be deliberate by this careful parallel made in the Ordinal.

The long prayer preceding the laying on of hands follows the Preface-structure of the 1928 *Deposited Book*. Into this prayer are inserted the words " our great High Priest ". It now reads in the South Indian Ordinal, " . . . Jesus Christ *our great High Priest* to be our redeemer. . . ." This is the only reference to priest or priesthood in the Ordinal. It is significant that this addition concentrates attention on the priesthood of our Lord when every other change in the text avoids any suggestion of ministerial priesthood being conveyed by this ordination. This emendation expresses in liturgical form the theology of Orders set forth in the *Constitution*. There is no ministerial priesthood distinct from the priesthood of the laity. Those who framed the

liturgical and constitutional formulae of the Church of South India were of a common mind, for both documents express a consistent theology of orders.

The formula of ordination reads, "for the office and work of a Presbyter in the Church of God", with no reference to the power of binding and loosing. The formula is an exact duplicate of the second alternative formula of ordination in the American *Book of Common Prayer*.² The absence of any reference to the power of priestly absolution corresponds to the doctrine stated in the *Constitution* that one power of the ministry is "to declare his message of pardon to penitent sinners". There is nothing faulty or careless in the construction of the formularies of the Church of South India. Both the constitutional and liturgical formularies consistently minimize the sacerdotal nature of the office of "presbyter". One cannot help but wonder how carefully these changes were examined by the Committee on Unity of the 1948 Lambeth Conference. The *Report* of that Committee states that the Church of South India "has used for the consecration of its bishops a form, and has prepared an ordinal, so similar in all essentials to those in use in the Anglican Communion that any suggestion that these forms were in themselves inadequate to convey the authority of the episcopate and the priesthood can be dismissed without question".

As we turn from the Church of South India to those reunion proposals still in process of negotiation, we find a series of schemes for organic union and a series of schemes for inter-communion. These employ a device not present in the South India Scheme, that of supplemental ordination. Supplemental ordination means a mutual laying on of hands to supply to each ministry what it lacked in separation. By this method the differing ministries are to be unified. The device raises many serious theological questions which are not easy to resolve. Those who hold to this method do so because of a theory that in divided Christendom all ministries are to some degree defective. But there are both Anglicans and non-conformists who

² The following note is not in the original, but is here added for the information of English readers who are unlikely to be familiar with the American Prayer book.

The Ordering of Priests: second alternate ordination formula:

"Take thou authority to execute the Office of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed to thee by the Imposition of our hands. And be thou a faithful Dispenser of the Word of God, and of His holy Sacraments; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

The relation of this form omitting the reference to the power of absolution to the first and usual form has been exhaustively discussed in F. L. Cirlot, *Apostolic Succession and Anglicanism* (Lexington, 1946), pp. 256-262 and L. A. Haselmayer, *Lambeth and Unity* (New York, 1947), p. 107 n. 60.

see in supplemental ordination nothing but a surreptitious re-ordination. There are Anglicans who cannot see what possible grace could be bestowed upon Anglican priests by this device; and there are non-conformist ministers who reject it completely as an invalidation of their ministries. It was rejected in South India for this reason. It is the cause of controversy in Australia. It is at present the subject of debate in Ceylon. The problems connected with this method of unification of ministries have been extremely well summarized in the excellent *Appendix* to the 1948 Lambeth Conference *Report on Christian Unity*.³ The theory of supplemental ordination does mean at least that the fullness of the ministry of each church is to be conveyed to the other. This would require that the Anglican contribution be not only the episcopate but the priesthood as well. Yet we find in all of these documents employing supplemental ordination a consistent tendency to minimize the priesthood and its sacerdotal character. The concept of supplemental ordination usually results in a formula for the extension of authority. It becomes not an ordination, but a commission to minister.

2. The United States of America. The successive sets of reunion-schemes between the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. were based upon the theory of supplemental ordination. This was described in the *Report of the Commission on Approaches to Unity* to the General Convention of 1940, and in the document *Joint Ordination*. It was elaborated in more constitutional detail in the document *The Proposed Basis of Union . . .* presented to the General Convention of 1946. In this document the term "presbyter" appears throughout, usually accompanied by the term "priest" in parentheses. These references by themselves neither deny nor affirm explicitly the sacerdotal character of this office, although a question might be raised about the preference of "presbyter" to "priest". It can be suggested that this preference arises from the fact that the other negotiating

³ *Lambeth Conference 1948, Reports*, pp. 64-66. The theory of supplemental ordination was first set forth by the 1920 Lambeth Conference, *An Appeal to All Christian People*, Section VIII. The Report on the Unity of the Church of the 1930 Lambeth Conference records the failure of this suggestion to capture the attention of non-conformity. Lambeth Conference 1930 (S.P.C.K., 1930), p. 118. A theological basis was provided for this method by Canon O. C. Quick in *The Doctrine of the Creed* (New York, 1938), p. 341, and C. C. Richardson, *The Sacrament of Reunion* (N. P., 1940), pp. 18-31. A sympathetic plea for this method appears in G. Bloomfield, *Anglican and Free Church Ministries* (S.P.C.K., 1944). The theological problems raised by the schemes employing this method are presented without resolution of the basic cleavages in the 1948 Lambeth Report.

group was a Presbyterian body. The sections on "the Ministry" in *The Proposed Basis of Union* do not offer much illumination on this point. Part I, Section 2, par. (f), "The Ministry," specifies that there are "prophetic, priestly, and pastoral functions committed to the Church by its Lord." Part II Section 2, par. (10), "The Presbyterate," describes the office, but aside from a rather non-committal statement on "the ministry of reconciliation and the cure of souls" does not give much clarification. It was clearly stated by the dissenting *Minority Report* of the Commission that "... the Presbyterian view of the ministry utterly rejects the Prayer Book idea of the priesthood ..." and affirms that the terms of the *Proposed Basis of Union* are accommodated to a Presbyterian rather than an Anglican view of the ministry. These statements leave the question open as to the intention to continue the priesthood in the united church.

This doubt, raised by the vague statements and the *Minority Report*, seems to be confirmed by the liturgical formula by which the commissioning or supplemental ordination is to be effected. The service is not called an ordination, but "formal services of mutual recognition and extension of authority to minister in the united Church", and what is done is called "commissioned". The formula itself makes no mention of any office. The form to be used by Anglicans on Presbyterians reads:—

The Ministry of the Word and Sacraments which thou hast already received is hereby recognized: and the grace and authority of Holy Orders as conferred by this Church are now added.

The Presbyterian form for use on Anglicans reads:—

Take thou authority to execute the ministry and to dispense the Word of God and His holy sacraments in this united Church; in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

These formulae are curious liturgical compositions. What is said over the Presbyterians specifies no office at all. The sentence of recognition is elaborated by the use of the words provided in Canon 36 of the *Constitution and Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America* for the letters of ordination of ministers of a non-episcopal communion ordained to the Anglican ministry.⁴ The form to be used by Presbyterians is

⁴ Canon 36, "Of the Ordination of Deacons and Priests in Special Cases," Section 6 (b). "The letters of ordination in such cases may contain the words: Recognizing the ministry which he has already received and hereby adding to that commission the grace and authority of Holy Orders as required for the exercise of the ministry of this Church." *Constitution and Canons*, 1946, p. 89. - Note the subtle changes by the omission of "that commission" and "as required for the exercise of the ministry".

merely the sentence of jurisdiction from the Anglican Ordinal. These forms specify no office, suggest no sacerdotal function, and the omission of "now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands" leaves the action quite devoid of any sacramental character. It is highly questionable whether these forms are anything more than the extension of jurisdiction. Certainly there is very little suggestion that this is an ordination to the priesthood.

The thinking behind these formulae was influenced by the proposals for intercommunion in Australia. A letter written in January, 1942, by the Right Reverend Dr. Edward L. Parsons, retired bishop of California, to the Archbishop of Brisbane has recently been published indicating this influence.⁵ A comparison of the Australian formula with the 1946 American proposals reveals that the *Proposed Basis of Union* in actuality is asserting the parity of Anglican and Presbyterian orders, and proposes to unify these ministries, not by supplemental ordination to supply a missing sacramental grace, but by a mere extension of authority and jurisdiction.

3. Australia. In Australia, there has been in progress since April 27, 1937, in the Province of New South Wales, a series of conferences between Methodists, Congregationalists, and Anglicans in an attempt to find some means of establishing intercommunion. This is not a scheme for organic reunion, but merely of inter-communion through the extension of a mutually recognized ministry. The device of supplemental ordination is the mode suggested to achieve this end. The problems raised by the conferences resolved themselves into the construction of a formula which could effect this extension of ministry. The formula was originally devised by the Right Reverend Reginald Halse, now Archbishop of Brisbane. In its original version it read:—

Receive the Holy Ghost for the fuller exercise of Christ's ministry and priesthood in the Church of God; and for a wider and more effectual service therein take thou authority to preach the Word of God, to fulfil the ministry of reconciliation, and to minister Christ's sacraments in the congregations

⁵ " . . . To work that out we took as the basis your plan, which we know commonly as the Australian Plan. It is, of course, the same principle, but it enabled us to put the phrasing a little differently, and to bring a somewhat different emphasis. The changes which we have suggested in it are quite minor, and, of course, grow out of our immediate needs, and the fact that there are only two bodies concerned." Cited in F. de Witt Batty, *The Australian Proposals for Intercommunion* (S.P.C.K., 1948), p. 43.

whereunto thou shalt be further called or regularly appointed.
And see that thou stir up the grace bestowed upon thee in the
Call of God and by the laying on of hands.

The formula is open to certain literary objections. It is very verbose. The second sentence is awkward in sequence. The inclusion of material from the Anglican formula of consecration to the episcopate seems to achieve no end. The reference to "the laying on of hands" is rather more loosely tied to the act of imposition than in the Anglican original. But there seems to be no intention of stripping this action of its sacramental character. The clear reference to priesthood is most acceptable to Anglicans.

But since this first edition, the formula has had certain revisions. The latest edition of October 29, 1943, has changed the phrases "for the fuller exercise of Christ's ministry and priesthood in the Church of God" to "for the wider exercise of thy ministry in the Church". The word "priesthood" is dropped. The change from "Christ's ministry" to "thy ministry" and from "the Church of God" to "in the Church" under-emphasizes the divine origin of the Church and ministry and the continuity of this church with the historic Catholic Church. The other changes are largely literary and have no doctrinal intent.

One can scarcely agree with the Bishop of Newcastle, New South Wales, in his commentary upon these revisions. "In the course of subsequent discussions, the wording of the proposed mutual formula received some modifications. . . . But its intention and purpose has in no way been modified. It seeks to secure the object at which the Group was aiming by bringing into existence a ministry whose authority to minister could be recognized as adequate by all denominations concerned." The deletion of the word "priesthood" is a departure from a ministry acceptable to Anglicans. It is evident, from the lengthy discussion and debate which occurred in Australia over the question of whether this formula constituted an ordination or a reordination, that the form is intended to be merely the extension of jurisdiction. The Preface to the latest revision states that "It is understood that the acceptance of a wider ministerial commission does not in any sense imply re-ordination, but . . . such an extension of ministerial authority as will accomplish the desired end." The declaration to be made by those receiving this commission defines the content of what is received through the laying on of hands as "such further authority as shall seem 'good to the Holy Ghost and to us' ". The Collect preceding the laying on of hands states that it is to effect an "enrichment of our ministries in the service of thy Holy Church". The revisions of the text, the commentaries upon it by members of the negotiating group, and the sense of the words in the surrounding liturgical action demonstrates that there is no intention whatsoever to convey the priesthood.

Parallel to these conferences in New South Wales, there has been another series of conversations between Anglicans and Methodists in Melbourne from 1932 to 1947. These conferences resulted in a set of conclusions, but no specific proposals or suggestions. The inconclusiveness of the findings on the matter of the priesthood in these Melbourne conversations is an interesting commentary upon the empty content of agreement in the conversations in New South Wales.

Chapter IV of the printed findings deals with "The Christian Ministry", declaring its work to include "prophetic, pastoral, and priestly functions". The priesthood of Christ and its communication to the priestly character of the Church is affirmed. The discussion of the priestly character of the ministry is less certain. Section 14 reads:—

Without attempting definition, it may be said that the priestly functions of the Ministry are those which the Christian minister is authorized, by the Church, (a) to perform on behalf of Christ towards His people, and (b) on behalf of the Church in its approach to God through Christ.

Two additional sections illustrate this statement with many scriptural references. Section 17 is devoted to a vindication of the priesthood of the laity. At this point the discussion ends with an appended *Note on the Ministry as a Priesthood*. The traditional Catholic and Protestant "divergent streams of thought" are described, and the suggestion is made that both sides have much to learn.⁶ It is apparent from this inconclusive report that no kind of agreement is yet possible in this area of Australia because of the obstacle of the priesthood.

4. North India. The Scheme of Union in North India has been in the process of Round Table Negotiation since 1929. It is a plan for organic union between four bodies: The Anglican Church in North India, The United Church of North India, the Methodist Conference (British and Australasian), and the Methodist Conference (American). These negotiations produced a *Proposed Basis of Union* published in July, 1947. This was presented to the Lambeth Conference in 1948 and forms the subject matter of

⁶ *Report of the Melbourne Anglican-Methodist Conferences on Reunion* (Diocesan Book Society, Melbourne, 1947), p. 23. "... seeing this, it is widely asked, if we cannot yet so gain the mind of Christ (where truths can not stand in contradiction) as to think alike in this matter, can we not so adjust our thinking and utterance that we no longer deny the truth which others hold."

Resolution 63. Unfortunately this Lambeth judgment is now out-moded. The Round Table Conference revised the Plan in February, 1948, but these revisions were not printed in time to come before the committee preparing the agenda for the Lambeth Conference. The final text to date of the plan is that approved in February, 1948.

The Plan involves the unification of the ministry through a mutual laying on of hands, or supplemental ordination. Section VII, "The Ministry," of the *Proposed Basis of Union* sets forth the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. This is elaborated by the description of the ministry.

The Ministry of the Church, alike in its priestly, pastoral, and prophetic aspects, derives from the heavenly pattern of the risen and ascended Christ, who is at once the great High Priest, the Chief Shepherd of souls, and the Eternal Word of God. It is committed to us as a function of the whole body of Christ, and cannot therefore be claimed exclusively by individuals or by one order within the Church. (See Eph. iv. 11-13, and I Cor. xii).

In the last revision, changes were made especially in connection with the service of supplemental ordination and in the text of the formula to be used. All references to supplemental ordination were deleted. In Section VIII (iii), "The Initial Ministry of the Church," additions were made to the text to emphasise the common lack in all ministries about to be unified. The theory of a common defect in all ministries in a divided church is the theological justification for the method of supplemental ordination. The additions made to the text are designed to strengthen this point of view. The words "in an act of supplemental ordination" are changed to "in a solemn act of humility and rededication with prayer". The statement of a common lack is amplified by the sentence, "In this act we seek the grace of God for the wider and more effectual fulfilment of our ministry under God's gracious providence in leading us into this union." The act of unification is not intended to be an ordination, but a mere extension of authority. In the clause "uniting with them the additional authority and grace that they lack in separation", the words "and grace" are now removed. This mutual laying on of hands imparts no "grace", but merely extended authority.

In line with this general revision of the theory of the unification, a significant change is made in the formula. This was borrowed originally from the first Australian intercommunion formula. In the 1947 edition of the *Proposed Basis of Union* it read: "Receive the Holy Ghost for the fuller exercise of Christ's ministry and priesthood in the Church of God." Both the term "priesthood" and the distinction between "ministry and priesthood" have

been removed in the revision of 1948. The latest text reads: "Receive the Holy Ghost for the fuller exercise of Christ's ministry in the office of a Presbyter in the Church of God. . . ." The term "priest" and the suggestion of an ordination are removed.

A letter recently published by the Reverend W. Machin, secretary of the Round Table Conference and a representative of the British Methodist Conference, serves as an explanation of these changes. He states that the changes were made "at the request of our Church [the British and Australasian Conferences of the Methodist Church] backed up by a suggestion from the American Methodist Church in Southern Asia. . . . The changes were made because it was found that the existing wording was misunderstood." The wording is now clear that there is no order of the priesthood to be conferred and that the service of the unification of the ministry is not an act of supplemental ordination.

5. Ceylon. *The Proposed Basis of Church Union in Ceylon*, recently revised and re-published, is the most promising of reunion proposals. It was given more enthusiastic attention than any other item on the agenda by the Committee on Unity of the 1948 Lambeth Conference. Many revisions were made over the 1946 text. A careful collation of the revisions indicates that most of them strengthen the Anglican contribution of the historic Catholic Faith. In matters of doctrine, sacraments, and liturgies, the revisions are all most commendable. With regard to the ministry, there is still considerable question as to the clarity of intention. The scheme involves the Anglican Diocese of Colombo of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon; the Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian bodies in Ceylon; and the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India.

The reunion is to be effected by a service of the unification of the ministry. It has certain unusual features not present in other reunion schemes. There is a laying on of hands, but the term "supplemental ordination" is not used. It is proposed to incorporate into the united church the threefold order of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons. At the time of unification, those chosen for the office of bishop are to be consecrated by those already bishops, and future ordinations to the second office of the ministry are to be episcopal ordinations. At the outset, the second order of the ministry is to be unified at a special service. No name is given to this. It is not called supplemental ordination, but is a new service at which no questions are asked or judgments rendered on any ministry. The Bishops shall receive the ministers of all the uniting churches by the laying on of hands and the use of a formula which asks God to bestow on each minister what

God knows is lacking in his previous ministry. This is to be introduced by a Preface stating "the purpose and intention of the uniting Churches in taking this action and in formulating and performing these rites". This Preface deserves careful attention.

The good hand of God being upon us, these several Churches, called together into visible unity as part of the Universal Church with an agreed basis of faith and order, desire at the inauguration of union, by the use of the liturgical forms herein set forth, to bring about such a unification of the sacred ministry in this Church as shall join together in one all the several inheritances of grace and authority which have hitherto been the possession of each Church in separation. In so doing, it is the intention of this Church to continue and reverently to use and esteem the threefold Ministry of Bishop, Presbyter, and Deacon which existed in the undivided Church.

Inasmuch as there are to be unified into the one ministry of this Church, ministries which have all been blessed as ministries of Christ's Church and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace, but which at the same time are different both in ethos and in authority, this Church recognizes that there is need for the ministers of all the traditions to receive by the diverse operation of the Holy Spirit such character, grace, gifts, and authority as they may now need.

Then follows the laying on of hands with this formula :—

Forasmuch as you were called and ordained to the Ministry of the Church of God within the . . . Church, and are now called to the Ministry of the Church of God as Presbyter within this United Church ; receive from God at my hands, the power and grace of the Holy Spirit to exercise the wider ministry of this office, and to nourish by Word and Sacraments all the members of Christ's flock within this United Church, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Take authority to preach and teach the Word, to fulfil the ministry of reconciliation and to minister Christ's Sacraments in the congregation whereunto you shall be duly appointed. Amen.

The service is clearly called, "A Service of Reception into the Presbyterate of the United Church of Those Already Ordained to the Ministry by the Uniting Churches." In the Thanksgiving Prayer preceding the laying on of hands, the same theory is

stated in the petition to God, "Do Thou pour out Thy Holy Spirit to endue each according to his need with grace and authority for the exercise of the office of Presbyter in this United Church."

The question arises at once as to whether this is an act of supplemental ordination. A leading Methodist proponent of the Scheme, Mr. D. T. Niles, has called it "an open service" in his elaborate theological exposition of the Scheme recently published. Bishop J. E. Lesslie Newbigin of the Church of South India has most vigorously criticized the Ceylon Scheme on the grounds that the service is actually an ordination. Since the plan of union includes the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India, Bishop Newbigin's criticism has certain practical implications. He states, "I cannot help thinking in spite of all that has been said, that the Ceylon proposals have that character. The act proposed as the condition of the unification of the ministries is an act of ordination. The fact that it is not called ordination does not alter the fact that it is, in every respect, a complete service of ordination to the ministry." Mr. D. T. Niles has jumped to the defence of the Scheme and answers Bishop Newbigin on this point.

The one interpretation which the Ceylon *open Service* completely rules out is that it is a service of *re-ordination*: for both in the preface as well as in the formula, it is explicitly stated that the ministers who are being received through this Service into the presbyterate of the United Church are all ministers of the Church of Christ and have been ordained as such. What the Ceylon service leaves open is the *possibility* of the interpretation that this service *includes* an act of *supplemental* ordination. It is quite incorrect to say that this is a service of supplemental ordination which is not called as such, for there is no sense in refusing to give it a name if a name can be honestly given. On the other hand, a name is not given precisely because it is an *open Service*. . . . The Ceylon service provides a service of *unification* of Churches and their ministries, the nature of the unification act being open to God's sovereign decision. We dare not defend any of God's gifts against the further action of God, whatever be the nature of that action.

Thus Anglicans would question whether this Act is supplemental ordination or not. A Methodist defender states that it might be such. A leader of the Church of South India, arguing in favour of the South India method of acceptance of all ministries *ab initio*, finds that it is re-ordination. There is no doubt that the expression of these diverse points of view by those concerned with the formulating of the proposals will require further revision.

As one studies the rest of the text of the scheme, one finds very little illumination on this point. The various statements on the ministry in the plan, and the liturgical arrangements for future ordinations to the presbyterate, are confusing and inconsistent. In Section 1, "The Nature of the Union," the theory of a common defectiveness in all ministries of divided Christendom is stated and the assertion is made that all ministries are "real ministries of the Word and Sacraments". Section 6, "The Ministry," sets forth the claim that the Church is "the priestly Body in which all members of the Church, according to their measure, share in the heavenly High Priesthood of the Risen and Ascended Christ" and that "no individual and no one order in the Church can claim exclusive possession of this heavenly priesthood". The second order of the ministry is usually referred to as the Presbyterate. But parallel with these statements are a series of references to "priesthood". "Ministerial priesthood" appears in Section 7:II. Section 7:II (b) refers to "A presbyter (i.e. priest)", although the formula borrowed from the Anglican ordinal specifically states, "Receive the Holy Spirit for the office and work of a Presbyter." By some curious coincidence, one of the Collects provided for the Service of Reception at the unification of the ministries reads, "Thy servants called to the office of priesthood." A collation of the 1946 and the 1948 texts of the Scheme would suggest that many of the earlier references to priesthood were not edited when this new service of the unification of the ministries was inserted. There is not a consistent theology of orders expressed in these constitutional and liturgical texts.

The questions raised by the service of unification, the discussions of the meaning of that service among non-conformists in Ceylon, and the references here and there to "priesthood" leave the Ceylon reunion proposals in a fluid state. One cannot judge the intention with regard to the priesthood at this present moment. If further revisions follow the pattern of proposals in South India, the United States, North India, and Australia, it would seem a safe prediction that these references to priesthood will soon be deleted.

6. Iran. Discussions regarding church unity in Iran between Anglicans and Presbyterians began in 1912. The document, *A Draft of the Proposed Constitution for the Union of the Presbyterian and Anglican Episcopal Churches in Iran*, was published in 1945. The Iran Scheme accepts all ministries at the outset in a service of unification. It is clearly stated that this is not supplemental ordination but an extension of authority.

The first act of the newly consecrated bishops of the Church of Christ in Iran shall be to commission by the laying on of

hands all of the ordained Ministers of both the uniting churches for service in the Church of Christ in Iran. Such a Commission does not imply re-ordination or a repudiation of the validity of the orders of either Church as real ministries of the Word and Sacraments, but rather an extension of ministerial authority which is conferred on all concerned by the fact of union.

The formula for use on this occasion reads:—

Receive the Holy Spirit for the work of a presbyter in the Church of God, both for the continuance of that work which thou hast done hitherto and for the performance of that work which is now committed unto thee by the laying on of our hands.

Take thou authority to preach and teach the Word, to fulfil the Ministry of reconciliation and to minister Christ's sacraments in the congregations whereunto thou shalt be further called and lawfully appointed; and see that thou do all these things in brotherly partnership with God's fellow workers whom in this union of Churches He has made thine.

So specific are these statements that the Committee on Unity of the 1948 Lambeth Conference was compelled to state that it could not regard this as in any sense implying episcopal ordination.

After the union, all ordinations to the presbyterate are to be performed by bishops and presbyters jointly. The definition of the work of the presbyter limits sacramental powers to this office, but the absence of any liturgical formulae for the ordination leaves the question open as to the meaning of this office. The fact that the scheme accepts from the outset all ministries through a form of commissioning would suggest that there is no intention to continue the historic priesthood of the Church.

7. Canada. In Canada, a plan for intercommunion by the formation of a mutually acceptable ministry between the Church of England in Canada and the United Church of Canada was published in 1946. These proposals have certain features not common to any other scheme. The negotiating bodies clearly recognize that the two ministries are entirely different in ethos and nature.

We have considered the subject of the Ministry in both Communion and are of the opinion that these two Ministries are best considered as parallel to one another rather than identical. The Church of England has the threefold Ministry of Holy Orders: the United Church has the Holy Order of

Presbyterial Ministry in which there is no distinction of orders, and has its Church Courts. . . . It is, therefore, impossible to say at any point that there is an exact identity.

The only method for identifying these ministries would be for the ministers of each communion to receive ordination at the hands of the other.

The whole Committee considers it desirable, therefore, that in any future union each Communion should contribute the *whole* of its ministry each to the other. As a step towards this end, we suggest that once each Communion is satisfied that the formularies of the other teach sufficiently the true Christian Faith, and after sufficient instruction of the Ministers in the practical exercise of the other Ministry, any Minister of the United Church could receive Holy Orders according to the form and manner of the Church of England in Canada, and any clergyman of the Church of England in Canada could be admitted to the Ministry of the United Church by the appropriate Court of that Church, and according to the form used in the United Church Book of Common Order.

The detailed arrangements provide for a complete exchange of ministries. The priest of the Church of England is examined, licensed to officiate, and then ordained according to the form of the United Church. The United Church minister is confirmed, ordained deacon, and then ordained priest according to the Ordinal of the Book of Common Prayer. The forms for use are those taken from the official ordination services of each communion.

These proposals raise by implication serious theological questions which are not faced in the document. It is quite evident that the grace of the priesthood is given to the United Church ministers. But the content of the grace given to the Anglican priests is not defined. The Report states that

. . . this United Church Ministry possesses a quality and tradition of its own. They recognize among other things that it is of a specifically constitutional character because, through the operation of the Church Courts, the faithful people and the presbyters have an effective voice in the outward call of a man to the Ministry and in the recognition of his inward call. There is also the special quality of this Ministry which is harder to define but which manifests itself in the pulpit Ministry, in the conduct of public worship, and in the sharing of pastoral care with the members of the local Church session.

There is nothing, however, in this description which suggests any grace beyond that of a commission. A commission can be given by any duly constituted body, but it hardly requires the sacramental action of ordination.

The Report further declares that no questions are asked about the validity or regularity of the ministry. It is proposed "that in both cases it should be made clear, by a preface to be read before the Service, that in neither case is any man denying the reality of the Ministry he has already received and exercised, but that he is seeking a commission for a further Ministry, and the necessary grace from God to perform the same." The Preface itself reads:—

... we come to these solemn acts wherein we convey each to the other the graces of our several ministries, neither denying to the other its heritage in the Holy Catholic Church, nor the reality of its ministry, as a ministry of Christ, but both desiring to increase our gifts and enlarge our opportunities for the extension of Christ's Kingdom.

These declarations indicate that it is not an ordination but an extension of jurisdiction with spiritual power to enable the person to perform it. The document includes two contradictory points of view. It provides for a mutual supplementary ordination in action, while denying it in theory. The Canadian Scheme, which is one of the newest explorations in the field of reunion, has just begun to raise the vast theological questions connected with supplemental ordination which were so well summarized in the Unity Report of the 1948 Lambeth Conference.

Just what would be accomplished by this set of proposals was questioned by the 1948 Lambeth Conference. "As compared with constitutional schemes they do not sufficiently provide for a real growing together such as would lead to an organic union." The reception given these proposals in Canada has been quite lukewarm, and it is apparent that further revisions will have to be made if more interest is to be developed.⁷

⁷ Cf. the statement of the Most Reverend G. F. Kingston, Primate of the Church of England in Canada in *The Canadian Churchman*, November 4, 1948, p. 3: "The conversations so far have not proved fruitful in consummating a plan for a mutually acceptable ministry. . . . We are anxious that the conversations may continue, and in the light of all the proposals for reunion reported at Lambeth it may be possible to work out a plan which will be more acceptable to all concerned than the one under discussion now."

This survey of reunion-schemes involving the Anglican Communion indicates the extent to which the theory of supplemental ordination has been a principle of construction, in the attempt to bridge the gap between episcopal and non-episcopal ministries. This theory, advanced by the Lambeth Conference of 1920, has now run its course in reunion negotiations. The report on the theological difficulties appended to the 1948 Lambeth Conference document is sufficient indication of this fact. But as it is used in this variety of reunion-schemes, it ends with the abandonment of the priesthood. In South India, the entire method was rejected as part of the scheme. In the United States, Australia, North India, and Iran, the concept of the priesthood is lost while the method remains integral to the plans. In Ceylon and Canada, the attempts to cling to the priesthood have raised contradictory elements into an inharmonious dualism. As far as practical affairs are concerned, there has yet to be worked out any reunion-scheme based on supplemental ordination which can maintain the priesthood. None of these schemes enable the Church of the Anglican Communion to contribute to the united Church the whole of its ministry.

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